

Chepachet Fire District

Executive Committee – Monthly Meeting

October 17, 2012

The Chepachet Fire District monthly meeting was held at the Chepachet Fire Station on Wednesday, October 17, 2012. Vice Chairman Robert Lohr called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Members present were George Leonhardt, Eric Croft and Lynda Martone. Also present were Treasurer David Steere, District Clerk/Secretary Darlene Shields, Tax Collector Patricia Svansson, Chief Robert Dauphinais. Absent were Earl Newman and Deputy Chief Dennis Huestis

Secretary's Report:

All members have received copies of the minutes for September 26th Monthly Meeting for their review. Motion made by Mrs. Martone to accept the minutes as presented, second by Mr. Leonhardt and passed 4–0.

Tax Collector's Report:

Mrs. Svansson had a few things regarding last month's minutes regarding the questions about the properties that were pulled from the tax sale. Mrs. Svansson addressed the issue with the 7 properties that were pulled from the tax sale. This has never happened before because normally the Chepachet Fire District has its' Tax Sale prior to

the Town's Tax Sale.

Mrs. Svansson can't tell the board if we weren't using the same attorney that the town was using what would have happened.

Breakdown on the 7 accounts fees are as follows: 6 accounts have fees of \$299.45 each and 1 account had fees of \$305.65. The reason for the difference is the amount of certified mail being sent out. Total charges are \$2102.35. The fees have been added to each account and will accrue interest the same as an unpaid tax bill.

The bills that were pulled from the tax sale do not get reported to the Town because they did not go to tax sale and were not sold.

Mrs. Svansson stated the reason the attorney told her to pull those 7 properties from the tax sale was because a few weeks prior to the district tax sale the town had their tax sale and the same properties were on their list and the town did not get a notice stating that these properties were up for tax sale from us.

Mr. Steere had dropped off a copy of the law for holding tax sales. Mrs. Svansson did contact the attorney who held the tax sale and he would be glad to submit letter explaining why he felt it was necessary to have those properties pulled prior to the tax sale. The attorney felt that it was best to pull those properties to protect the Fire District's interest to having the sale voided due to lack of notice. If someone did claim the district had an illegal sale the district would be

responsible for all fees for those properties were sold at the tax sale and the 10% interest that will be charged within the first 6 months.

If the properties get sold in the meantime then the new owners would get the bills and they would be responsible. Mr. Leonhardt asked why the new owners would be responsible of any outstanding taxes. Mrs. Svansson would advise the new owners to contact the closing attorney who's responsibility it would have been to see if there were any outstanding taxes due prior to the closing.

Mrs. Svansson said the properties will most likely be up again for tax sale and it would be the districts' decision whether they chose to put the properties up again next year. Mr. Steere said most likely you would because you wouldn't be able to pick and chose who to put up for tax sale. District's does not discriminate and all properties are treated the same.

Most of the properties are owned by one man who's father purchased most of the properties a previous tax sales over the years and the son did pay for some years but has just stopped paying over the last couples of years.

Tax Rate:

Mrs. Svansson has a projected 415,740,353 assed amount. They only not included is the fireman's exemptions. That amount at .965 cents per thousand would be \$400,804.00. Mr. Steere said he was looking

to keep the rate at .96 per thousand but this year the exemptions went up a lot. Those exceptions are most likely senior exemptions. IF the rate is set at .965 the \$400.804 would be \$1152 extra where if the rate was set at .96 it would \$925 short of the budget.

Mr. Steere recommended the .965 which would be a balance budget.

Motion made by Mr. Lohr to set tax rate at .965 per thousand, second by Mr. Croft and passed 4-0.

Motion made by Mr. Leonhardt to accept the Annual Tax Collector's Report, second by Mrs. Martone and passed 4-0.

Treasurer Report:

Mr. Steere presented the Treasurer's Report for October 2012. We had some of the bigger expenses come in such as insurance we also made the paper transfer for the truck investment of \$50,000. Tax sale Expenses are high right now but will be adjusted. Mr. Steere mentioned the interest on the new Money Market account at Navigant to date is \$291.00 since the end of July when the account was open. Also, \$100,000 from third party has been transferred to the budget. Truck fund account is at \$207,800 for when the new truck comes in.

Motion made by Mrs. Martone to accept the Treasurer's Reports as presented and to pay the monthly bills, second by Mr. Croft and Passed 4-0.

Chief's Report:

Chief Dauphinais read and submitted the September 2012 Monthly Chief's Report and Annual Chiefs Report to be placed on file.

Chief also mentioned that there will be an increase of mutual aid due to a new policy that any calls at night that are deemed serious the police will dispatch 2 departments. This is mainly because Harmony and sometimes Chepachet are having some difficulty on getting the trucks out on the night calls.

Motion made by Mr. Leonhardt to accept the Chief's Monthly Reports for September 2012 place the copy on file, second by Mr. Croft and passed 4-0.

Committee: Fire Truck Committee: Chief Dauphinais submitted pictures of the new truck so far. Seems to coming along pretty good and still ahead of schedule.

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. Chief's Review

a. Vice Chairman Mr. Lohr asked the Chief if he would like to have his review in closed session. Chief Dauphinais said he was fine with an

open forum.

Mrs. Martone told Chief Dauphinais that he does a fantastic job and really appreciates all he does and that he really puts his heart into the job and appreciates all he does.

Mr. Leonhardt also thanked Chief for all he does and said this is more than a job for him and it's his love for the job that makes a difference.

Chief feels that everything is going well overall. Membership is down and getting new members is difficult. He also feels that times have changed and even though there are new younger members getting new members are tough. Year ago people had to be voted on and were waiting to become a member. That's not the case today. Most people are working 2 jobs and then have their families and don't have the time and the new younger members are great but new members are needed.

One of the problems is the amount of training that is required. Training money is available but the members have to be will to spend the hours needed to complete the training. EMT Training is now up to 240 hours to be a Cardian it's an additional 140 hours. Fire Fighter I takes 80-120 hours and Fire Fighter II is 130 hours.

Chief feels that all the required training discourages people from joining.

The Chiefs are looking to requirements and what the options are.

Pascoag already pays people around the clock to man their station. Chief Dauphinais is looking into the possibility of per diem for the night shifts.

Mr. Lohr said the Chief's Appointment will be at next month's meeting and if he had anything he would like to discuss to please contact any of the board members at anytime.

2. Insurance

a. Change in policy has been made to the insurance. The 3 Districts were one policy for the Accident and Sickness policy and each District will now have their own policy. This change actually will save the Chepachet Fire District \$1040.00 this is mainly because VFIS is looking to keep each District separate and the decrease is mainly because the other 2 districts have long term claims against the policy where Chepachet does not. This will also allow the members to now work over the 24 hours that has been in place due to the 3 different policies. The members can still not work more than 24 hours in any one station but can work in other stations just as long and not more the 24 hours in any given station.

3. Audit Update:

a. Mr .Steere mentioned at Darlene has been in contact with Mr. Malo for the audit and is hoping to have a draft by next week. Mr. Steere is hoping to have copies for the board for next month's meeting.

4. Street Lights:

a. Mrs. Shields mentioned that it's time to review the street lights. Mainly go through and make sure what's was requested a few years ago to be turned lights not in our district are still off and make sure no new lights have been added. Mrs. Shields did mention again that the town has been notified that the Chepachet Fire District did send a letter to advised the town that the district is not interested in assuming the costs for the new lights on Main Street that are part of the new beautification project. Mrs. Shields made mentioned that letter had been read and put into the minutes of the Town Council's meeting.

Someone had contacted the Town Council for a street light to be added at the end of their property. Chief Dauphinais is aware of this request and had told the person requesting the light that the Chepachet Fire District would not be interested in paying for this light. It was not an area that would be considered unsafe. He did advise this person that they can contact Nationgrid and pay for themselves if they would like one there.

Mrs. Shields feels that it may be a good idea to send a letter to Nationalgrid that with the Beautification Project and individuals who are looking now or in the future to having street lights installed that they notified that the Chepachet District has to be notified for all approvals.

Mrs. Shields will draft a letter to Nationalgrid to be read at next month’s meeting to be approved by the board.

Motion to hold November’s Monthly Meeting on November 14th due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, second by Mr. Leonhardt and passed 4-0.

Next scheduled meeting is the Monthly Board Meeting is November 14th at 6:30pm

With no further business at this time, motion made by Mrs. Martone to adjourn, second by Mr. Leonhardt and passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:26pm

Respectfully submitted,~~~~~

Darlene L Shields

Darlene L. Shields

District Clerk / Chepachet Fire District